

REMARKS

Applicants thank Examiner Burnham for the courtesies extended to the undersigned during a teleconference on December 12, 2005. In the Office Action mailed June 21, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1-26. By way of the foregoing amendments and the markings to show changes, Applicants have amended claims 1, 12 and 17 and canceled claim 23. The foregoing amendments are taken in the interest of expediting prosecution and there is no intention of surrendering any range of equivalents to which Applicant would otherwise be entitled in view of the prior art.

I. Rejections under 35 USC 112

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 3-12, 14-16, 22 and 24 under 35 USC 112 as being indefinite. In particular, the Office Action suggested that, in claims 1 and 12, the phrase, "one or more of the channel forming ribs along with one or more of the tubular structures extend independently or cooperatively horizontally substantially entirely from a first side of the first panel to a second side of the first panel".

The undersigned discussed this phrase with Examiner McPartlin during the teleconference of December 12, 2005. It was agreed, in those discussions, that the phrase "independently and cooperatively" should be removed from claims 1 and 12. It was also agreed that such removal would not change the scope of the claims. In particular, it was agreed that the claims would still cover the situation in which one rib independently extends horizontally substantially entirely from a first ... to a second side of the first panel and would also cover the situation in which two or more ribs cooperatively horizontally span substantially the entirely the distance from one side to a second side of the first panel (e.g., where a first rib spans one portion of the distance and a second rib spans a different portion of the distance).

II. Rejections under 35 USC 102 or 103

The Office Action rejected claims 17-18, 19, 20 and 25 as being obvious in view of Leistra (5,782,537) in combination with one or more of Rink (5,092,942), Krassilnikov (US2003/0197296) and Nagamitsu et al. (US 2002/0060492). The Office Action, however, indicated claims 1, 3-12, 14-16, 22 and 24 as allowable if rewritten or amended to over the rejections under 35 USC 112, indicated claims 21 and 23 as

being allowable if rewritten in independent form and indicated claims 26-28 as allowed. **In this Response, Applicants have amended the claims such that only allowed or allowable subject matter remains pending as explained below.**

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 112. Thus, claims 1 and 12 and their dependents are allowable.

Claim 17 was rewritten to be claim 23 in independent format. Claim 17 and its dependents are therefore allowable.

Claims 26-28 are allowed.

By amending the application, the Applicants do not concede that the patent coverage available to them would not extend as far as the original claim. Rather, Applicants intend to file a continuation application to pursue the breadth of the claims as filed. Applicants believe that the Examiner has not made a sufficient showing of inherency of the teachings of the asserted prior art, especially given the lack of teachings in the cited references of the properties that Applicants have recited in their claims.

Further, by the present amendment, it does not follow that the amended claims have become so perfect in their description that no one could devise an equivalent. After amendment, as before, limitations in the ability to describe the present invention in language in the patent claims naturally prevent the Applicants from capturing every nuance of the invention or describing with complete precision the range of its novelty or every possible equivalent. See, Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co., 62 USPQ2d 1705 (2002). Accordingly, the foregoing amendments are made specifically in the interest of expediting prosecution and there is no intention of surrendering any range of equivalents to which Applicants would otherwise be entitled.

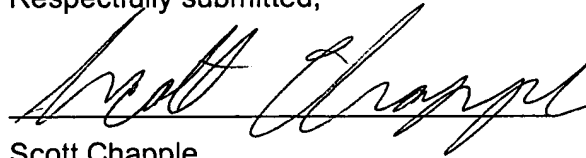
CONCLUSIONS

In view of Applicants' amendments and remarks, the Examiner's rejections are believed to be rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and requests that the Examiner pass the case to issue at the earliest convenience. Should the Examiner have any question or wish to further discuss this application, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (248) 292-2920.

If for some reason Applicant has not requested a sufficient extension and/or have not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent the abandonment of this application, please consider this as a request for an extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge our Deposit Account No. 50-1097 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

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